

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Resolution ALJ 176-3095
Administrative Law Judge Division
September 19, 2002

R E S O L U T I O N

RESOLUTION ALJ 176-3095. Ratification of preliminary determinations of category for proceedings initiated by application. The preliminary determinations are pursuant to Article 2.5, Rules 4, and 6.1 of the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure. (See also Rule 63.2(c) regarding notice of assignment.)

The Commission's rules and procedures which implement the requirements of Senate Bill (SB) 960 (Leonard, ch. 96-0856) are, for the most part, found in Article 2.5 of our Rules of Practice and Procedure. The rules and procedures were adopted by the Commission in D.97-11-021, which describes more fully the background to the development of these rules. Rule 4 describes the formal proceedings to which the SB 960 rules (Article 2.5) apply. Rule 6.1 requires the Commission to preliminarily determine a proceeding's category, whether the proceeding requires a hearing, and designate an Assigned Commissioner and Administrative Law Judge. Rule 6.1(a) states that the preliminary determination of category is not appealable but shall be confirmed or changed by Assigned Commissioner's ruling. Unless and until a preliminary determination is changed by such ruling, the preliminary determination of category governs the applicability of the other reforms that SB 960 requires. Rule 63.2 provides for petitioning the Commission to reassign a proceeding to another administrative law judge. Rule 63.2(c) establishes the time for filing such a petition. For purposes of Rule 63.2(c), notice of the assignment is the day the assignments associated with this preliminary categorization document appear in the Daily Calendar following the Commission business meeting.

The Categories

SB 960 makes sweeping changes in many aspects of the Commission's practices in an effort to improve the quality and timeliness of Commission decision making. It creates three categories of proceedings: adjudicatory, ratesetting, and quasi-legislative. The

applicability of many of the changes it requires depends upon the category assigned to the proceeding. For example, the ex parte rules which apply differ if the proceeding is categorized as adjudicatory rather than quasi-legislative. The Legislature defined each of these procedural categories in Section 7 of SB 960. Consistent with these definitions, the rules provide that:

“‘Adjudicatory’ proceedings are: (1) enforcement investigations into possible violations of any provision of statutory law or order or rule of the Commission; and (2) complaints against regulated entities, including those complaints that challenge the accuracy of a bill, but excluding those complaints that challenge the reasonableness of rates or charges, past, present, or future.

“‘Ratesetting’ proceedings are proceedings in which the Commission sets or investigates rates for a specifically named utility (or utilities), or establishes a mechanism that in turn sets the rates for a specifically named utility (or utilities). ‘Ratesetting’ proceedings include complaints that challenge the reasonableness of rates or charges, past, present, or future. For purposes of this Article, other proceedings may be categorized as ratesetting as described in Rule 6.1(c).

“‘Quasi-legislative’ proceedings are proceedings that establish policy or rules (including generic ratemaking policy or rules) affecting a class of regulated entities, including those proceedings in which the Commission investigates rates or practices for an entire regulated industry or class of entities within the industry.” (Rules 5(b), 5(c), and 5(d).)

Mixed or Unclear Category Proceedings

For a proceeding that may fall into more than one category, the rules allow parties to recommend that the Commission pick the most suitable category, or to recommend dividing the subject matter of the proceeding into different phases or one or more new proceedings, each with its own category. The rules provide that a proceeding that does not clearly fit into *any* of SB 960’s defined categories will be conducted under the rules applicable to the ratesetting category. As such a proceeding matures, the Commission may determine that the rules applicable to one of the other categories, or some hybrid of those rules, would be better suited to the proceeding.

As stated in D.97-06-071, ratesetting proceedings typically involve a mix of policymaking and factfinding relating to a particular public utility. Because proceedings that do not clearly fall within the adjudicatory or quasi-legislative categories likewise typically involve a mix of policymaking and factfinding, the ratesetting procedures are, in general, preferable for those proceedings.

Next Steps

As stated above, this preliminary determination of category is not appealable. Once interested parties have had an opportunity to respond to the initiating party's proposed category, the preliminary determination shall be confirmed or changed by Assigned Commissioner's Ruling pursuant to Rule 6(a)(3). This Assigned Commissioner Ruling may be appealed to the full Commission pursuant to Rule 6.4(a). Parties have 10 days after the ruling is mailed to appeal. Responses to the appeal are allowed under Rule 6.4(b), and must be filed and served not later than 15 days after the ruling is mailed. The full Commission will consider the appeal.

Any party, or person or entity declaring an intention to become a party is entitled to petition for reassignment of the proceeding to another Administrative Law Judge, as described in Rule 63.2. Such a petition must be filed no later than 10 days after notice of the assignment. For purposes of Rule 63.2(c), notice of the assignment is the day the assignments associated with this preliminary categorization document appear in the Daily Calendar following the Commission business meeting.

Conclusion

The Commission has reviewed the initial pleading of the utility applicants listed in the attached schedule and has made a preliminary determination of category and need for hearing, consistent with the requirements and definitions of Article 2.5 of its rules.

IT IS ORDERED that each proceeding listed in the attached schedule is preliminarily categorized, and the need for a hearing is noted.

ALJ/hkr

I certify that the foregoing resolution was duly introduced, passed, and adopted at a conference of the Public Utilities Commission of the State of California held on September 19, 2002, the following Commissioners voting favorably thereon:

/s/ WESLEY M. FRANKLIN

WESLEY M. FRANKLIN
Executive Director

LORETTA M. LYNCH
President

HENRY M. DUQUE

CARL W. WOOD

GEOFFREY F. BROWN

MICHAEL R. PEEVEY

Commissioners

PRELIMINARY DETERMINATION SCHEDULE

Resolution ALJ 176-3095 (9/19/02)

NUMBER TITLE	PROPOSED CATEGORY	PRELIM. CATEGORY	HEARING
A02-08-035 NECC TELECOM INCORPORATED, for Registration as an Interexchange Carrier Telephone Corporation pursuant to the provisions of Public Utilities Code Section 1013.	NDIEC Registration Application	Ratesetting	NO
A02-08-036 MONARCH COMMUNICATIONS, INC., UNIVERSAL BROADBAND COMMUNICATIONS, INC., for Approval of an Asset Purchase Agreement and to Transfer the Certificate of Monarch Communications, Inc., an NDIEC operating in California, to Universal Broadband Communications, Inc.	Ratesetting	Ratesetting	NO
A02-08-037 TELEDIAS COMMUNICATIONS, INC., for Registration as an Interexchange Carrier Telephone Corporation pursuant to the provisions of Public Utilities Code Section 1013.	NDIEC Registration Application	Ratesetting	NO
A02-08-038 WILLIAMS COMMUNICATIONS, LLC, a Delaware Limited Liability Company (U 6146-C), for Authority to Construct specified Telecommunications Facilities.	Ratesetting	Ratesetting	NO
A02-09-004 DAMON A. BAXTER, dba DEPENDABLE MOVING SERVICES, for a Household Goods Carrier Permit.	Ratesetting	Adjudicatory	YES
A02-09-005 PACIFIC GAS AND ELECTRIC COMPANY, (U 39-E), pursuant to Resolution E-3770 for Reimbursement of Costs associated with delay in implementation of its New Customer Information System caused by the 2002 20/20 customer rebate program.	Ratesetting	Ratesetting	YES
A02-09-006 WILD GOOSE STORAGE INC., for Review under Public Utilities Code Section 851 et seq., of the Transfer of its Indirect Control to EnCana Corporation, or, in the alternative, Request for Declaratory Order.	Ratesetting	Ratesetting	NO

PRELIMINARY DETERMINATION SCHEDULE

Resolution ALJ 176-3095 (9/19/02)

NUMBER TITLE	PROPOSED CATEGORY	PRELIM. CATEGORY	HEARING
A02-09-007 SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA EDISON COMPANY, (U 338-E), for Authority to Lease available Land on the Barre-Villa Park and Lewis-Serrano Transmission Right of Way to RHC Communities, LLC.	Ratesetting	Ratesetting	NO
A02-09-008 SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA EDISON COMPANY, (U 338-E), for Authority to Lease available Land on the LaFresa-Lighthipe Transmission Right of Way to General Mills Operations, Inc.	Ratesetting	Ratesetting	NO
A02-09-009 SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA EDISON COMPANY, (U 338-E), for Authority to Lease available Land on the Etiwanda-Padua and Mira Loma-Padua Transmission Right of Way to Copart, Inc.	Ratesetting	Ratesetting	NO
A02-09-010 DYNEGY CONNECT, L.P., for Registration as an Interexchange Carrier Telephone Corporation pursuant to the provisions of Public Utilities Code Section 1013.	NDIEC Registration Application	Ratesetting	NO
A02-09-011 ALL-STAR ACQUISITION CORPORATION, for Registration as an Interexchange Carrier Telephone Corporation pursuant to the provisions of Public Utilities Code Section 1013.	NDIEC Registration Application	Ratesetting	NO
A02-09-012 NORTH COUNTY TRANSIT DISTRICT, to construct a grade-separated overhead bridge structure for the exclusive use of light rail transit, single track crossing over the existing at-grade crossings of Barham Drive, SR-78 and Rancheros Drive in the City of San Marcos, County of San Diego, California.	Ratesetting	Ratesetting	NO
A02-09-013 PREMIER TELECOM, INC., for Registration as an Interexchange Carrier Telephone Corporation pursuant to the provisions of Public Utilities Code Section 1013.	NDIEC Registration Application	Ratesetting	NO

PRELIMINARY DETERMINATION SCHEDULE

Resolution ALJ 176-3095 (9/19/02)

NUMBER TITLE	PROPOSED CATEGORY	PRELIM. CATEGORY	HEARING
A02-09-014 ARASH NOURANIAN, dba GREEN VAN AIRPORT SHUTTLE, FARIBORZ AND NORA ALISHAHI, dba GREEN VAN AIRPORT SHUTTLE, for Approval of the Transfer by Sale of the operating authority held by Fariborz and Nora Alishahi dba Green Van Shuttle in Passenger Stage Corporation Certificate 10867 to Arash Nouranian pursuant to the provisions of Public Utilities Code Section 851 et seq.	Ratesetting	Ratesetting	NO
A02-09-015 BLUE & GOLD FLEET, L.P., for an Order Authorizing Discontinuance of Alameda/Oakland Passenger Vessel Service upon completion of its contractual agreement to provide such service.	Ratesetting	Ratesetting	YES